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STATE FOR NEA/ARPI SWALKER, LONDON FOR LTSOU

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SUBJECT: KUWAIT PLEDGES 1.5 MILLION USD AT UNRWA DONOR
CONFERENCE

¶1. (U) Kuwait, demonstrating its continued support for Palestinian refugees, pledged \$1.5M at the December 5 United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) donor conference held in New York. Kuwait's 2005 pledge matches its 2004 contribution and will support UNRWA's 2006 budget. Another 19 countries also made pledges at the conference, bringing the total pledged to approximately \$73.5M. Kuwait's contribution was the highest among Arab countries that pledged, including Bahrain (\$30,000) and Lebanon (at least \$10,000). (Note: Saudi Arabia, traditionally UNRWA's largest Arab donor, has not yet made a pledge.)

¶2. (U) Local English language press quoted the new UNRWA Commissioner, Karen AbuZayd, praising Kuwait's contribution, stating that "the Arabs, and certain Arab countries do extremely well for UNRWA, particularly the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait. Kuwait is one of our major donors, it contributes every year to the UNRWA general program, which is a bit unusual for Arab countries, who mostly contribute to our infrastructure projects." In 2004, Kuwait's \$1.5M contribution was the second highest among Arab donors, ranking ahead of the UAE (\$500,000) and second to Saudi Arabia's \$1.8M contribution.

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